

REMARKS

The claims and drawings have been objected to due to informalities. The drawings (Figs 1 and 2) have been amended. The objection to claim 28 is moot in view of its cancellation.

Claims 22-42 have been rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph. Claims 23 and 31, incorporating claims 22 and 30, respectively, have been amended to remove the noted antecedent basis problem.

Claims 22, 28-30, 32, 35 and 36 have been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as unpatentable over Hamada (US 4,745,540) in view of Thomsen (US 5,278,956); claims 33 and 34 have been rejected under 35 USC 1039a) as unpatentable over Hamada in view of Thomsen, further in view of Feder (US 5,872,845); claim 37 has been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as unpatentable over Tretter (US 5,927,218) in view of Thomsen; and claims 39-42 have been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as unpatentable over Tretter in view of Thomsen, further in view of Feder.

Claims 22, 28-30, 32-37 and 39-42 have been canceled. The rejections to these claims are therefore moot.

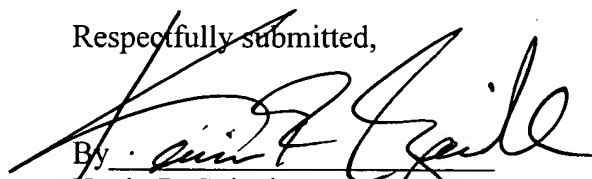
Claims 23-27, 31 and 38 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to overcome the rejection under 35 USC 112, second paragraph. The claims have been rewritten in independent form to remove the rejection under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, and to incorporate the base and any intervening claims.

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the outstanding rejection of the claims and to pass this application to issue. If it is determined that a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number given below.

In the event the U.S. Patent and Trademark office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, applicant petitions for any required relief including extensions of time and authorizes the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to Deposit Account No. 03-1952 referencing docket no.449122024200. However, the Commissioner is not authorized to charge the cost of the issue fee to the Deposit Account.

Dated: December 2, 2004

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kevin R. Spivak", is written over a horizontal line.

Kevin R. Spivak

Registration No.: 43,148
MORRISON & FOERSTER LLP
1650 Tysons Boulevard, Suite 300
McLean, VA 22102
(703) 760-7700 – Telephone
(703) 760-7777 - Facsimile

Attachments

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

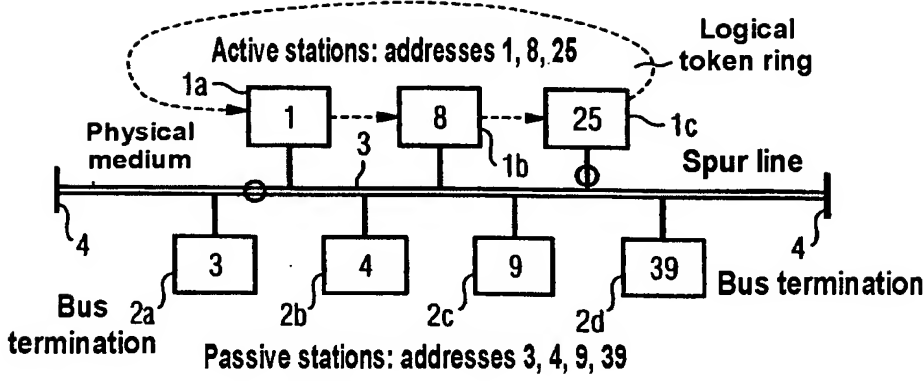
The attached sheet(s) of drawings includes changes to Figures 1 and 2. No new matter has been added

Attachment: Replacement sheet
 Annotated sheet showing changes

ANNOTATED SHEET SHOWING CHANGES

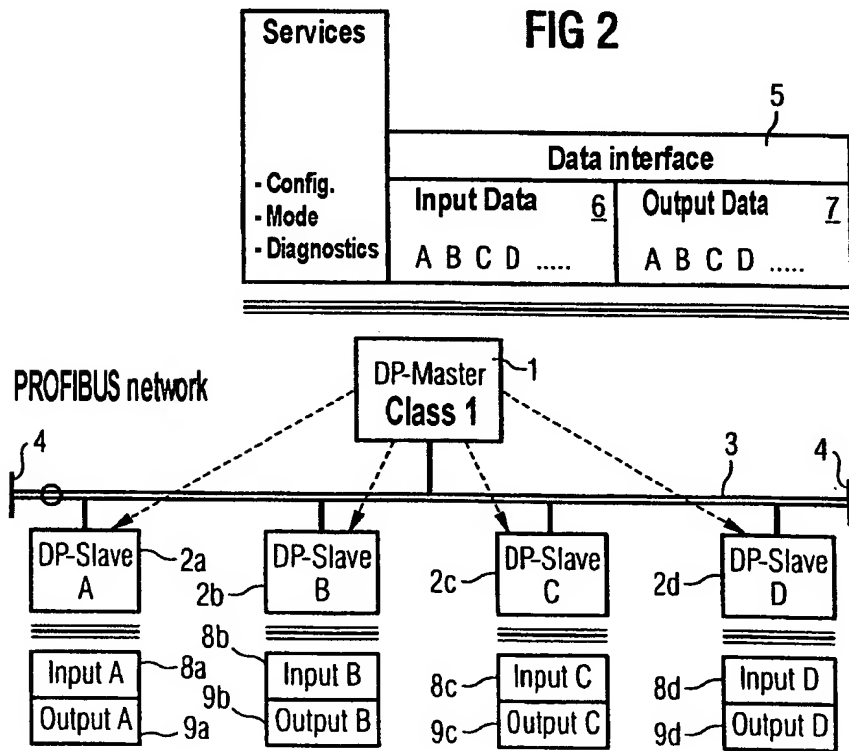


FIG 1



PRIOR ART

FIG 2



PRIOR ART

ANNOTATED

REPLACEMENT SHEET